US-India CEO Forum

1085. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the mandate given to US-India CEO forum, Sector-wise;

(b) whether it covers even the policy matters like judicial reform, giving 'freehand' to private institutions to fix fee, review of copyright act, energy security, *sub judice* case of Bhopal gas tragedy in Supreme Court etc.;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether corporate interest of a few US investors are being given an institutional framework through this forum; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to ensure that the forum functions within the constitutional propriety?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The India-US CEO Forum, whose activities are coordinated through the institutions of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the US India Business Council (USIBC), is a forum in which the private sector representatives of the two countries interact and also discuss their input to the annual India-US Economic Dialogue, a Government-to-Government interface, for strengthening bilateral trade and economic linkages between the two countries.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

PM's Visit to Russia

1086. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRA SEKHAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new agreements have been signed and the existing ones updated between India and Russia during Prime Minister's recent visit to Russia; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, agreement-wise?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. The following agreements/documents were signed during the Prime Minister's visit to Russia on 11-12 November, 2007 to enhance cooperation in respective fields: (i) Agreement on cooperation in development and production of multi role transport aircraft; (ii) Agreement on cooperation to combat illicit trafficking in narcotics, psychotropic substances and their precursors; (iii) Agreement on cooperation in the field of joint moon exploration; (iv) Letters of Exchange for utilizing rupee debt funds for Russian investments in India.

Passports/Visas to Indians Abroad

1087. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several Indians living abroad for years are not being issued visas and passports by the concerned Indian Embassies and High Commissions, to return to India;